

MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission
FROM: Mark P. Smith
DATE: January 10, 2001
RE: 2002 Workplan

The following projects are recommended for the 2002 work plan for the Water Resources Commission.

Water Assets Project - This project will help communities plan for their long-term water supply and wastewater disposal needs and identify lands that may need to be protected for this purpose. Using the information developed by the build-out analyses as a starting point, the project will develop information on a community and watershed basis to highlight local and watershed issues. In addition to land protection, the work will be aimed at helping communities understand the role of demand management in meeting future needs, the role of 'keeping water local' in protecting water resources, and the need to manage peak flows to reduce water system and environmental impacts.

The project will have three phases. A pilot project will be completed early in 2002 to help define the desired outcomes. Second, existing information on water demands and water resources will be developed for each community. This will allow each community to begin work on these issues. Third, work on developing new statewide data layers will begin, including surficial geology and water and wastewater infrastructure. This data should be completed statewide over 2 or 3 years, at which time a more refined analyses of areas that may be a high priority for protection can be identified.

Outdoor Water Use - The policy and guidance documents are currently out for public comment. The comment period ends January 18, 2002. At that time, changes will be considered and the final policy and guidance will be brought for a vote by the WRC in the spring. An outreach and education program will be developed to assist communities implement the guidance. Staff will also pursue other recommendations of the task force, such as considering changes to the plumbing or building code and certification programs for irrigation installers.

Interbasin Transfer Act Guidance - The 1985 document, A Guide to the Application of the Interbasin Transfer Act and Regulations, has been updated. The draft update incorporates recent policies and the Performance Standards. DEM's graphics department is working on the layout. The draft document should be available in the spring of 2002.

Interbasin Transfer Act Regulations - Staff has been working on a draft of suggested changes to the regulations. An internal draft is being prepared. Once this is finalized, the

proposed revisions will be presented to the WRC for discussion and review before the formal rulemaking process is undertaken.

Stressed Basins - Work on further identifying stressed basins will continue. Work will focus on using the target fish community approach to define habitat stress for rivers and streams. A presentation on this approach is being scheduled for the January 2002 WRC meeting. Work on water quality will also be pursued in 2002.

Drought Management Plan - The plan is currently being used by DEM and MEMA to assess hydrologic conditions. State agencies are being asked to formally endorse the plan. The plan will then be integrated into the Statewide Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

MWRA System Expansion Policy - The MWRA and the MWRA Advisory Committee are reviewing the MWRA system expansion policy. Staff will be attending the MWRA Advisory Board meetings on this issue and commenting where appropriate. The Commission will request that the Advisory Board make a presentation regarding its deliberations on this important issue.

Biological Conservation – The recent Biomap project will be presented to the WRC. Staff will develop recommendations on how this information can be used by the WRC and by other agencies.